

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9358

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 1443

EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN FROM FINN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, IN

SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS

1. JUST GOT BACK FROM MY SESSION IN BOMBAY WITH THE PARKERS, TO FIND THE PEACE CORPS FLAP, AND HAVE JUST READ THE TWO CABLES ON THIS SUBJECT SENT YOU IN THE PAST 24 HOURS.

2. I BELIEVE THEY INCLUDE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE A PRETTY CONVINCING CASE; TO WIT, IT'S PRETTY IRONIC TO MAKE US OUT AS WILD-EYED RADICALS GOING CRAZY OVER THE PEACE CORPS PRECISELY THREE DAYS BEFORE THE NUMBER OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN INDIA REACHES ABSOLUTE ZERO FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWELVE YEARS; WHEN WE ARE OPERATING UNDER THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S CEILING OF FIFTY VOLUNTEERS (COMPARED WITH THE PEAK OF 1276 VOLUNTEERS REACHED DURING THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION); AND WHEN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS WE HAVE REQUESTED FROM WASHINGTON TO DATE COMES TO 33. IT IS THE KIND OF CHARGE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, IT'S SO LUDICROUS, AND ANY CONGRESSMAN SHOULD QUICKLY REALIZE THAT.

3. YOU MAY ALSO WANT TO POINT OUT THAT WHAT WE'RE GETTING IN INDIA NOW ARE TRAINED, SKILLED VOLUNTEERS, AND THEY ARE TYPICALLY FROM FARM STATES. THE SIX TRAINEES CURRENTLY IN INDIA ARE (A) A ZOOLOGIST FROM CALIFORNIA, (B) A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE FROM PERU UNIVERSITY, NEBRASKA, (C) A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN

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FISHERIES ROM OHIO STATE, (D) A FISHERIES GRADUATE OF IOWA

STATE, (E) A FISHERIES ECONOMIST FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, AND (F) A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN FISH MORPHOLOGY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING.

4. IF THERE WAS EVER A CONTRAST WITH THE "A.B. GENERALISTS" -- THE SOURCES OF THOSE MANY TALES OF RADICAL KIDS LEADING DEMONSTRATIONS OVERSEAS -- RECRUITED IN THE SIXTIES, THIS IS IT.

5. YOU WILL RECALL THAT SESSION IN YOUR OFFICE WITH PEACE CORPS STAFF VISITING DELHI, AND YOUR REACTIONS THEREAFTER. WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW IS THAT -- WE HAVE IT FROM TWO PERSONS PRESENT AT THAT COUNTRYDIRECTORS' CONFERENCE -- VIRTUALLY EVERY ONE OF THE TWENTY OR SO COUNTRY DIRECTORS GATHERED HERE HAD IDENTICAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT PEACE CORPS/WASHINGTON: "SHORTFALLS" IN RECRUITMENT, LONG DELAYS, WEAK OR NONEXISTENT STAFF SUPPORT, TARDY SELECTION OF REPLACEMENT STAFF -- DUE, IRONICALLY, IN PART TO POLITICAL CLEARANCES --, AND A GENERAL SENSE THAT NO ONE IS LOOKING OUT FOR THEM BACK THERE. WE RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PRAISE FROM A TEN-YEAR PEACE CORPS VETERAN, HIMSELF DESOLATE OVER THE PLIGHT TO WHICH HIS AGENCY HAS COME, FOR NOT HIDING OUR FRUSTRATION FROM THE PRESS. HE SAID, IN EFFECT, " MOYNIHAN IS THE FIRST ONE WHO MATTERS WHO HAS HAD THE GUTS TO MAKE A FUSS ABOUT THE PEACE CORPS MESS."

6. MY OWN ANSWER TO REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMEN IS THAT IF THEY ARE PREPARED TO WRITE OFF THE PEACE CORPS AS AN AGENCY THAT HAS LOST ITS WAY, AND TO GIVE IT A DECENT BURIAL, WE WOULD CONCUR. UNTIL THAT DAY, AND SO LONG AS THE GOI WANTS VOLUNTEERS HERE, WE ARE PREPARED TO DO OUR BEST TO DELIVER A SMALL NUMBER OF SOBER, SKILLED YOUNG PEOPLE FOR RESPONSIBLE PROGRAMS THAT ARE REQUESTED BY THE STATES. WE ONLY NEED THE VOLUNTEERS*

7. I NEEDN'T REMIND YOU THAT, SINCE THE PEACE CORPS HERE IS ALMOST WHOLLY SUPPORTED OUT OF RUPEES, THE DIRECT DOLLAR COST TO THE UNITED STATES OF MAINTAINING THE PROGRAM HERE IS ALMOST NIL. MOREOVER, ACCESS TO THOSE RUPEES ENABLES THE PEACE CORPS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO FLY IN TWENTY-FIVE OR THIRTY
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PEOPLE FOR A CONFERENCE, AT ZERO DOLLAR COST TO THE AGENCY.

8. FINALLY, YOUR FIRST MAJOR CABLE TO BALZANO AND CRAW (NEW DELHI 12368) WAS SENT ON OCTOBER 24, SAYING " THE QUESTION NOW IS WHETHER WE CAN DELIVER THE VOLUNTEERS." THREE MONTHS HAVE NOW PASSED SINCE THEN, AND WE HAVE DAMN LITTLE EXCEPT BROKEN ASSURANCES TO SHOW FOR IT.

9. TO END ON A SOMEWHAT CHEERIER NOTE; DALE MAGERS SENT DAVE SCHNEIDER THE FOLLOWING MEMO THREE DAYS AGO" "I RECEIVED A NOTE FROM THE INDIA DESK OFFICER (PEACE CORPS/WASHINGTON) THAT NICK CRAW HAS ASSIGNED ALL INDIA PROGRAMS TOP PRIORITY FOR THE AGENCY. THAT MEANS THAT WE GET FIRST CHOICE OF ANY AVAILABLE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR OUR PROGRAMS."

10. ASSUMING THAT'S TRUE, OUR PROBLEMS SHOULD SOON BE SOLVED, AND THERE'S PROBABLY NO POINT IN BROWBEATING THE PEACE CORPS OR REHASHING THEIR SINS ON THE HILL.
SCHNEIDER

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